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ABSTRACT

A study investigated attitudes toward and practices of plagiarism of Japanese college students writing in English. Data were drawn from two senior theses written in English and two in Japanese, 30 other student academic papers, interviews with students, and a questionnaire administered to 46 undergraduate and graduate students. In both Japanese-language and English-language senior theses, unattributed quotations or paraphrases were common, in some cases comprising more of the paper than the student's own work. Over half the additional student essays examined had large quantities of plagiarism, sometimes with the body of the paper copied entirely from an original article. Overall, it was found that sources were given only, and not consistently, when quoting directly. No reporting verbs or attribution were used when paraphrasing, original texts were reworked with tell-tale "mistakes" added, and first and final paragraphs were generally the student's. In interviews, students cited lack of time as reason for plagiarizing, or initially denied plagiarism. Questionnaire responses indicate rationalization about plagiarizing, with some blame placed on teachers. Sample writing and student responses are included. Features of the Japanese academic context that are problematic for English writing instruction are examined briefly, and implications for teachers are discussed. Contains 22 references. (MSE)

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ED 409 724

Plagiarism and Academic Writing of NNS Learners (1)

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Abstract

There is a recognition that not a small number of Japanese learners of English engage in plagiarizing in the writing assignments for their university courses. Our aim is to confirm anecdotal evidence with ethnographic investigation, in particular to explore to what extent a cultural interpretation would be the best explanation of the learners' behavior. The initial impetus for this project derives from Scollon's (1995) call for research into the academic citation practices of learners in TESOL contexts which would take into consideration the broader cultural environment.

In this paper, first of all, we cite relevant studies on the problem of plagiarism by learners of English. We follow with a description of the sources of information we utilized in the collection of evidence as to what the learners do with regards to plagiarism and our collection of learners' accounts about the subject of plagiarism. Next, we suggest explanations of the findings and, finally, we discuss pedagogical implications which flow from our findings.

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INTRODUCTION

Incidents and anecdotal evidence accrue of learners' resorting to plagiarism in their essays and research papers. One of us acted as a tutor at a major university in the United Kingdom where an estimated 90% of the essays written by three students were plagiarized. A writing class at a Japanese university and one in Slovakia could not function unless the students did the writing in class, as most would copy from each other if work was assigned for homework.

However, for those whose L1 is an Asian language, the NNS experience of writing western-influenced academic papers in English is not just a matter of their engaging in plagiarism; there is clearly yet another type of problem when a student starts most of the sentences of an essay for application to a study abroad program with "I want to do X..." because, she recounts, she has been told that "westerners don't like it if you don't state directly what you think."

Further, NNS writing instruction has to look at the failure of learners to obtain admission to graduate programs due to their poor writing skills. The director of one UK M.Phil program wrote that there were three reasons Japanese applicants were denied admission recently: "a) written in such poor English that it was hard to distinguish an argument, b) consisted largely of extended quotations weakly strung together, c) a failure to integrate any reading into the discussion and a failure to present any sort of argument -rather the essay consisted of a disjointed series of sections which didn't have an obvious overall structure" (G. Brown, 1997). The comments speak for themselves; they paint a depressing picture of the state of affairs with regards to the academic writing of all but a minority of NNS learners of English. A desire to begin to document the actual situation in Japan with the

aim of working towards improvements in writing instruction so that a larger number of the English as foreign learners (EFL) learners would be more likely to achieve their professional goals led us to consider an ethnographic type of study in which we would seek evidence from a variety of sources.

Initial impetus for this project derives from Scollon's (1995) call for research into the academic citation practices of learners in TESOL contexts which would take into consideration the broader cultural environment. Although we decided to focus our attention on written assignments of learners within the classroom context only, thus partially rejecting for this project Scollon's suggestion that standards for citation in the English and in Chinese in Hong Kong media be compared with academic writing standards (1995, p. 383), we take up, nevertheless, the need to look at the broader social context to understand the problems of helping EFL learners develop academic writing skills, specifically focusing on plagiarizing the work of others. While there have been studies on the patterns of plagiarism found in Chinese learners of English writing (see, for example, Mataleine, 1985; Bloch and Chi, 1995), we examine this issue in the context of Japan and the writing of Japanese learners of English.

The problem as we conceive it derives from a recognition that not a small number of Japanese learners of English engage in plagiarizing in the written assignments they do in their university courses. Our aim came to be to confirm our anecdotal evidence with some ethnographic investigation, in particular to explore to what extent a cultural interpretation would be the best explanation of the learners' behavior. Despite Scollon's (1995a, 1995b) intellectual history type of interpretation and Pennycook's (1996) educational effects perspective, both of whom place strong emphasis on the Chinese learners' transferring practices from their L1 culture regarding views of originality, knowledge, and communication into their L2 tasks, we decided a look at the situation with Japanese students was warranted due to our sense

that a cultural transfer explanation would not alone provide a complete enlightenment on this contentious area.

In this paper, first of all, we cite briefly some relevant studies on the problem of plagiarism by learners of English. We follow with a description of our study, of the sources of information we utilized in the collection of evidence as to what the learners do with regards to plagiarism and our collection of learners' accounts about the subject of plagiarism. Next, we suggest explanations and interpretations of the findings and, finally, we discuss pedagogical implications which flow from our findings.

RECENT STUDIES

Plagiarism, that is, the use without attribution of the language and/or ideas in a source text, is, needless to say, not an issue exclusive to NNS learners of English in academic papers as successful NS writing in the same context includes the ability to integrate information from multiple sources and to use the conventions of academic writing to acknowledge the authors of the source texts. Nevertheless, our survey of relevant sources in this paper is limited to those concerned with L2 writing and only to some of particular interest published since 1990. The audience we wish to address in this paper is the L2 writing teachers who are concerned about changing their classroom practices to help the students develop their writing skills and to avoid plagiarism.

First, we summarize some contributions in the cultural/ideological perspective; then we cite some studies in a more narrowly educational and developmental frame.

Scollon (1995a) suggests that an ethnographic perspective be taken in efforts to understand the problem of teaching the attribution of sources in TESOL contexts, citing the need to go beyond the classroom to explore possible ideological explanations. In an earlier paper (1994), Scollon enters

this territory in raising the issue of "responsibility for the presentation of facts" (p. 36) vis-a-vis the NNS learner's perceived concern for the facts rather than "who might have originally stated them" (p. 38, his emphasis). Suggested explanations include low proficiency levels of the learners and the possibility that L1 writing practices may have an influence on signaling agency. Then, Scollon (1995b) argues explicitly that "the traditional view of plagiarism constitutes an ideological position...that...obscures our understanding of the construction of identity in intercultural discourse" (p.3). Supporting his contention by drawing on a variety of sources, with regards to such issues as voice, face, "private authorial self" and responsibility in the context of a sociocultural tradition which prioritizes groups over individuals, Scollon concludes that more research is called for to achieve understanding of other ideological positions to that underlying western-influenced writing conventions.

The theme of cross-cultural differences, indeed differing ideological positions with regard to authorship, responsibility for evidence, and attribution of agency is a major one, perhaps the most dominant, in the literature. Hinkel (1994) compares NS and NNS evaluations of four essays, two written by NSs and two by NNSs learners; the results indicate large differences in the evaluations concerning such features of academic texts in English as purpose, audience, clarity, and support for arguments. Although Hinkel's study does not address plagiarism directly, we can extrapolate from the results concerning support that, as the NNSs regarded one essay as including too much support for the argument, it is possible that drawing evidence from outside sources might be viewed by the NNS writers as unnecessary and, if done, valued for the factual information, ignoring the agent of the ideas. In other words, the "who," as Scollon claims, is not attended to in the way a Western-influenced writer would in creating text.

Bloch and Chi (1995) address plagiarism directly, specifically the use of citations in academic research papers by Chinese and English writers. The authors suggest in the first part of their paper that plagiarism might be labeled a "compensatory strategy" (p. 238), utilized by both NS and NNS writers particularly where there are pressures to conform to conventions which the writer may not yet have mastered. However, it is in the second part of the paper, where Bloch and Chi compare two Chinese rhetorical traditions of citations that it becomes clear that by one cannot assume one monolithic, static set of conventions in Chinese rhetoric.

Taylor and Chen (1991) contrast texts written by three groups of physical scientists: Americans writing in English, Chinese writing in English, and Chinese writing in Chinese, concluding that much of the variation in the introductions to the papers results from the discipline rather than cross-cultural differences. In other words, the genre of scientific writing may be as important a fact in characterizing text variation as culturally-influenced rhetorical styles. Further, a more valid picture would evolve by viewing the two sources of variation as interactive.

Pennycook (1996) examines notions of "text, ownership, memory, and plagiarism" (p. 201) in the Chinese context, taking a sociohistorical-educational effects view of the problem. His conclusions call for acknowledgment of the need to adhere to standards with regards to borrowing the language and /or the ideas without attribution, while, at the same time, a call to reassess how TEFL teachers view "supposed plagiarism," which, on his view, is "pedagogically unsound and intellectually arrogant" (p. 227). Pennycook cites the problematic establishment of "authoriality" and states that, in a critical discourse perspective, it is not possible to claim any objective basis for the conventions of academic writing as the practices have grown out of an ideology associated with power and hegemony in the contemporary world.

Leki and Carson (1997) discuss the need to address the distinction between intertextuality and plagiarism as a possible disadvantage of English for academic purposes (EAP) students' writing from sources.

> Students mentioned that words, sentence structures, organizational patterns, or even ideas as used up once the text employed them, making them unavailable for use by the students themselves. (p. 51)

Perhaps the learners resort to plagiarizing out of frustration, feeling there is little left to be created by them. Further, with regards to writing paraphrases and summaries in discipline-specific writing, the learners in their study felt such forms called for their writing beyond their proficiency level. One student cited in Leki and Carson's study makes a frequently heard comment about not understanding the reason a perfectly written text in English by a NS writer has to be transformed into poor English by a student (p. 59).

Taking more of a developmental perspective is the report by Campbell (1990), who discusses stages where learners engage in "degrees of copying" from the source texts. Her study documents the use of a reading text as a source for academic writing; she found that few of the students acknowledged the author of the background reading text. She concludes by claiming that language proficiency is an important factor in the ability of the learners to use the source text appropriately, with proper attribution of the source in their essays.

Connor and Kramer (1995) also investigate the ability to write from sources, utilizing essays of three ESL and two U.S. students of business administration. They also conclude that language proficiency may affect the students' writing skills, while in addition, stating that carrying out the task successfully may also be constrained by cultural and educational practices.

Braine's (1995) study of "Writing in the Natural Sciences and Engineering" addressed the question of application to the classroom head

on by stating "English teachers should have a better understanding of academic writing in order to teach it" (p. 113), a view with echoes found in Leki and Carson (1997) and Campbell (1990). Specifically, Braine suggests a genre approach to the teaching of writing so that learners in different disciplines develop an understanding and the ability to use the discourse conventions of their major fields; as paraphrase and summary writing figure prominently in technical writing genres, then pedagogical intervention should focus on providing many more opportunities for learners to practice those skills.

Finally, Smith (1997) zeroes in on the gatekeeping functions of academics, of which handling plagiarism by students would be one, and raises the question of the role and responsibilities of teachers with regards to students' goals in the U.S. academic context and beyond. Smith argues that gatekeeping is unavoidable and that, were students actually listened to, academics would find that most spend four years in a university to secure membership in professions and corporations and that it is ethically incumbent on the teachers to help them achieve those goals. Consequently, the functions of gatekeeping, including the penalizing of students who plagiarize, cannot be denied by teachers; while many, according to Smith, are more interested in issues of empowerment, cultivation of self-identity, and the authorial voice, in his view, teachers are bound ethically to help students achieve their often very instrumental aims. Writing courses which focus exclusively on creative writing and personal anecdotal essays may be viewed by the students as infantilizing, disempowering them for the future careers.

A cultural interpretation of the act of plagiarism may be the most plausible as the over-riding heuristic frame, subsuming the educational system under it as just one, perhaps the most important, of the sites for the playing out of a culture's values and beliefs. The way a writer or a speaker

handles the use of multiple sources of information to create text or discourse involves culturally-constrained notions of authority, entitlement, ownership, responsibility for information and evidence. Although only concerned with oral discourse, Besnier (1993) poses such questions as "How do the quoted speaker and the quoting speaker share responsibility for the information communicated in reported speech? (p. 161), with regards to reported speech in Nukulaelae, a Polynesian atoll community. The academic conventions, developed historically within Western contexts, clearly represent an ideological position, which can only be overcome if the balance of power changes at the global level. In everyday classroom practices, it behooves the writing teacher in particular of both NS and NNS learners to become more aware of the L1 cultural textual practices which the students bring with them to then help them become bicultural with regards to academic writing. We now turn to an exploration of the sociocultural-educational context of Japanese EFL writers.

OUR STUDY

While not engaging in a full-fledged ethnography, we collected information from three sources: (1) senior theses, in English and in Japanese, (2) other papers written by learners, specifically summary-reaction papers, and (3) input from learners in the form of responses to a questionnaire and informal interviews conducted during office visits.

SENIOR THESES

Japanese

Concerning senior theses written in Japanese included for the purposes of comparison, generally it is not clear which part is the student's own ideas and opinions and which consists of paraphrases, summaries, or unattributed direct quotations from outside sources. The student may state

that a particular theory, framework, or source will be used, even naming the author; however, proper citation form is not used and it is not transparent to the reader what is directly copied, what is paraphrased, and what is the student's comments. Two such theses were examined by counting pages or lines on pages. With regards to the first one, it is estimated that there were 26 entire pages, which represents 55.3% of the entire paper, composed entirely of unattributed quotations or paraphrases, while only six pages (12.8%) could be considered to be original to the student. Further, there were 6.5 pages (13.8%) with parts that appear to be unattributed quotes or paraphrases and 8.7 pages (18.5%) that appear to be the student's original. In sum, it appears that approximately 70% of the senior thesis was "copied."

In the second case, there were 14 (30.8%) entire pages with unattributed quotations or paraphrases and 25 (54.9%) pages which appear to be original to the student. As for parts of pages that appear to be unattributed quotes or paraphrases, 2.5 (5.5%) appeared to be so and parts of pages that appear to be the author's original comprise 4.5 pages (9.9%). The total is about 36% of the senior thesis being copied in some way. From these statistics, it may appear that the second one has more original material from the student; however, it is not entirely clear for the reason given above. Note that the calculations are approximate.

English

As for two senior theses written in English, in the first case, the student had had most of her secondary education in English-medium international schools abroad (Singapore and Australia). An examination of her thesis brought to light the following: (a) she had included a bibliography, no reference list; (b) she had cited only what she directly quoted; and (3) no sources were given for entire chapters of content on phonological, syntactic

borrowings from American into Australian English, nor for the framework she had adopted for her thesis. It was possible to discuss her writing with her and while she was cooperative in rewriting the thesis to make it conform more to standard academic practices, she maintained that she had not been taught that what she had done would be unacceptable.

For the second senior thesis written in English, the student had interwoven entire paragraphs and sentences copied from the original sources with a small number of his own. Also in this case, an interview with him resulted in his admitting that he had plagiarized due to time pressures on him to complete his thesis. In rewriting it, he substituted direct quotations for copied passages; however, he did not make efforts to paraphrase and then attribute the source of the ideas to the original author.

Other English Papers

An effort was made to collect other academic papers to obtain more evidence as to what learners do with their writing assignments. In the case of one assignment to write a summary/reaction paper on a journal article, of 30 assignments turned into the teacher, 16 were massively copied from the original articles. The students had been allowed to choose an article in a scholarly journal (e.g. from the *Journal of Pragmatics)* which they would then use as a source for their final, data-based paper at the end of the term. The pattern found in the assignments was that the student wrote an introduction and sometimes a reaction section in which they included their own ideas or personal accounts related to the topic of the article. However, some only provided an introduction, taking the reaction section from the conclusion of the original. The body of the paper was directly plagiarized from the original article.

In sum, we observed the following patterns of plagiarism in student writing: (1) sources are given only when directly quoting from a source, if

then; (2) no reporting verbs are used when paraphrasing or summarizing from a source, nor may there be attribution to the original author; the original text is reworked, with phrases, parts of sentences, lexis "copied" , sometimes with tell-tale "mistakes" of Japanese learners added, such as dropping all the definite articles; and (4) the first and final paragraph(s) are the student's with the body of the essay taken from the original.

Here is an example of the first type:

buck, of a horse that bucks	1838	1864
buckjumper, a bucking horse	1838	1878
bush, a forested land	1803	1827

> These examples may have helped to restore Australia's confidence in its linguistic identity, and indeed, there were optimistic views that Australia....As Dinning observed in *The American Scene* (1939), '...to use American slang - that very lively and expressive medium - is not to become Americanized....We all use that argot...England uses American slang and England is in no danger of Americanization."

As is clearly evident in this case, the student only gave the attribution for the direct quote, neglecting to provide the page number and giving only the date of publication.

An example of the first and second types is as follows:

> The first thing the infant must acquire is the concept of the self. Gender identity, the conception of self that one is female or male, is developed during the first few years of life. Before the age of three, children have little conception of sex roles. At the age of three to five, sex roles appears to be developing. From the age of five to seven, children achieve gender consistency, "the tendency to see oneself consistency as a male or female" (Pearson 38).

Other than providing an attribution for the direct quotation, the student gives no indication that the paragraph is a summary of a page of an introductory textbook by Pearson on gender development.

The next incorporates examples of the third and fourth patterns. Here is the first paragraph from a research paper:

> The reason why I chose to do my paper on metaphors was because metaphors make you think, in a new way, about the landscape we use. We use it everyday both when we talk and write. Metaphors are a part of everyday speech that affect the way in which we perceive, think and act. I did some research on metaphors and came up with different types of metaphors which interested me. And I took some metaphors from a magazine and analyzed them in this paper.

It is not difficult to find clues that this was written by a NNS learner of English: the use of "I", (2) phrases showing the presence of the learner, e.g. "my paper," the use of "you," and the very basic vocabulary, as well as syntactic awkwardness. Now, the following is the student's second paragraph and the original text, Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), which was only mentioned by the student when examples were cited.

Student

> Metaphor is for most people is viewed as characteristics of language, a device of the poetic imagination. It is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action.

Original

> Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish - a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action.

The student's paper continued for ten pages, almost all of it taken in this fashion from the Lakoff and Johnson book. It is indeed surprising that such a famous book would have been used rather than a minor one which a teacher might not have read.

INTERVIEWS

Whenever possible, we attempted to ask the learners to give reasons for their behavior. Most of them admitted that they had copied from the original source, giving such reasons as lack of time, not knowing how to do the assignment, and fear of getting a poor grade due to their English proficiency level. Some, however, did challenge us when confronted by our suspicion that they had plagiarized, denying their behavior at first. They appeared to be shocked that we had noticed that there was a clear gap between their own writing and speaking abilities and the writing of a native speaker of English, evident in the assignment they had turned in. In some cases, there is also an obvious gap between the intellectual level of the thoughts expressed in the writing in the plagiarized text and the undergraduate students' perceived capacity in the subject area which caused discomfort on the part of the student.

In most cases, given the choice of a failing grade or a chance to rewrite the paper, most chose the second option. Those who did not were failed and, in at least two cases, the students either continued to maintain that they had done nothing wrong and /or could not understand the teacher's behavior. Here is part of a letter of apology one such student left who had taken her entire final paper from one book.

> First of all, I want to apologize you to have used copies of the books for my paper. I did not think that would be so serious a problem. And also I didn't mean to cheat you.... Now I realized how silly I was. I'll write papers using situation. I hope you teach your classes with comfort. Again, I am really sorry to have been impolite to you.

There is an attempt to personalize the apology, to engage the relationship between the teacher and the student as the focus of the behavior and the expression of apology is more concerned with facework, benefiting the

hearer (the teacher) rather than the speaker's (the student) taking responsibility for her actions.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

In order to collect information about the learners' attitudes and experiences with plagiarism, we developed a questionnaire (see Appendix), drawing ideas for items from Pennycook (1996) and our own experiences in the Japanese university context. Due to the contentious nature of this subject of inquiry and the delicacy of the issue, we were only able to collect responses from 46 students. An attempt was made to explain the purpose of the survey to the informants, specifically that we would be using our findings to make suggestions to the English Language Program for revisions to the writing classes. While the results cannot be taken as more than providing a suggestive picture of the situation, we feel they are nevertheless representative enough to support further research.

Student Profile

We collected responses from 46 students who were taking two Languages Division courses (25 students) and two Natural Sciences Division courses (21 students). They consisted of 11 freshman, 10 sophomore, 17 junior and five senior students and two MA students; one student did not specify which year s/he was in. Of the 25 students taking one of the two Languages Division courses, 15 students belonged to the Division of Languages. five were in Education, two in Natural Sciences and one each in International Studies and Social Sciences. Of the 21 students taking one of the two Natural Sciences courses, on the other hand, one student was in the Division of International Studies and all the others were in the Division of Natural Sciences. With regard to gender, 12 students were male and 34 were female, which reflects the ratio

of the entire student body at the university. 16 students had experiences living abroad, and most of them had some training in academic writing in English.

When asked if they had plagiarized (see Appendix, Part II, #2), 23 students, approximately half responded, stating that they had sometimes done so. Two others answered they did it often; however, only two students wrote that they had been caught plagiarizing. One of them had been told to rewrite her paper and the other was warned not to plagiarize again.

Common Responses to Questions on the Questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire concerns students' attitudes toward academic writing in English. Students were asked to choose all the statements which fit their own feelings about academic writing; the total number of responses thus far exceeds 47. The most popular answer was that having to write papers in English was "useful training for their future career or work"; 36 students chose this, indicating that students may appreciate the training. At the same time, 28 answered writing academic papers was "necessary to fulfill graduation requirements"; this suggests that students might not enjoy writing or they might not think it is useful. The next popular item, chosen by 19 students, is "Writing in such a style is only required in courses done in English", which also implies that some students might consider academic writing a uniquely Western style that is irrelevant or unnecessary in Japanese.

It should be noted that 23 students wrote that they "want to learn how to write well in Japanese" and that 10 students stated they plagiarized in "courses which require papers in Japanese". These answers may appear irrelevant to the issue of academic writing in English. They, however, point to important factors that we believe may have contributed to the current situation in English classroom. That is, lack of training in academic writing in Japanese may have resulted in students' indifference to plagiarism. Moreover, approximately half of the students indicated their wish to master writing in Japanese, suggesting that

at least part of instruction in Japanese classes may need change. We shall come back to this point shortly.

Selection of Responses from Students

The questionnaire also included a section where students are requested to write in their own words how they felt about plagiarism. Not all the students wrote comments, and, generally speaking, students who had plagiarized tended to give excuses or rationalizing comments about their own and others' behavior while students who had never plagiarized were more likely to be negative toward plagiarism. There are some exceptions to this generalization, and some of the students' comments are examined in this section.

Firstly, here are some comments that fit the generalization. A third-year male student in the Natural Sciences Division who stated he had plagiarized often wrote: "If I totally agree to opinions of some articles, it's hard for me to make an academic essay on the topic". Also, a third-year female student in the Division of Education who had plagiarized sometimes stated, "To some extent, non-English natives have to imitate the way of writing in a text but must not just copy a whole of it!" The former justifies his behavior by claiming that it does not seem necessary to indicate sources of information with which one's opinion coincides. The latter attributes her action to her not being a native speaker of English. Although her rationalization is too rich (see, for instance, her wording "have to imitate"), it implies that students might not be receiving sufficient instruction as to why they should not plagiarize and how they could avoid plagiarism by paraphrasing, summarizing or explicating the source of information.

A fourth-year female student in the Natural Sciences who had plagiarized sometimes postulated that indifference to plagiarism is widely found among Japanese. She wrote: "In Japan, people are not generally aware of plagiarism. It seems that people believe it is OK not to cite sources and just

copy down a passage in essays written for university course. So it is good that students are informed of plagiarism at ICU". It is rather ironic that her own behavior does not reflect what she presumably had been informed. Similar comments were made by a few others, suggesting that the content of Japanese classes up to university currently does not incorporate something that is considered imperative in Western-style academic writing. This is backed by a third-year female student in the Division of Natural Sciences who had never plagiarized. She confesses that "I'm not sure the border of plagiarism and not plagiarism. And I think for us Japanese the definition of that is difficult and not understanding [sic]."

As stated above, students who had not plagiarized were critical of others who had plagiarized. This is a typical response from a third-year male student in the Languages Division who had never plagiarized: "I don't want to do it, because if someone ask [sic] about what you stated as you wrote, you can't explain it. Besides, I want my idea, original on my paper". Some of the students who never plagiarized, however, blame teachers. For instance, a third year female student in the Languages Division who went to an international school and who had never plagiarized wrote: "I do think that there are many professors at ICU who don't really read our essays carefully enough, especially professors who teaches [sic] large classes like General Education. It does bother me, to think some professors do not read it carefully when you put an effort on your paper and those who do plagiarize (consciously or unconsciously) get away with it anyway" [the emphasis original]. Similarly, a second-year female student in the same Division contended

> Teachers should be able to detect whether or not the students plagiarized or not. I've seen a lot of students plagiarizing at ICU. It is doubtful that the students have understood the reading and it is just a waste of time if students had not understood the reading.

A fourth-year female student in the Natural Sciences who had never plagiarized criticized teachers but for a slightly different reason.

> When I was in the first year, it was difficult to write an essay by the deadline without plagiarizing. Even outside the ELP, I copied passages from books when I wrote essays but that was because I hadn't realized that it was better to summarize and/or write my own ideas. Ever since I understood the importance of writing my own ideas, I have stopped copying sentences without reference" [original in Japanese].

Students' comments cited above thus can be classified into two types. One is 'excuses'. Students claim that they plagiarized because (a) as non-native speakers, their ability in English was not sufficient for them to paraphrase or summarize others' ideas and/or (b) as Japanese, they were not aware of what plagiarism is, why it is bad, or how plagiarism could be avoided. On the other are "accusations" or "reproach"; students felt that they were not the only guilty party. Teachers also were responsible as (c) they did not give students enough time to write essays and the students had to resort to copying other people's writing, or (d) they had not taught students about the negative view of plagiarism; even worse, (e) they did not recognize plagiarism when they saw it, thus inadvertently inviting students to plagiarize as it would be unpunishable.

DISCUSSION

In this section, we attempt to bring some light to bear on relevant contextual factors which comprise the background against which even the most motivated learners are forced to operate to develop their writing skills. First, we describe the training in the primary school mother-tongue classes followed by brief comments on the teaching of writing in English language classes. We then discuss the effects of the educational practices to which the learners are exposed.

First of all, according to Sasaki (1997), in mother tongue (*kokugo*) classes, Japanese learners are generally not taught to write essays in their

first language; in these classes, writing may be considered to be "taught;" however, this is arguable. Three types of writing are considered: (1) logical type sentences, (2) literary type sentences, (3) reaction statements. With the first, what might be labeled "expository" or "objective" writing, the propositional content is the focus and learners are expected to paraphrase the sentences of the text of study, with the purpose being to check that they have understood the content correctly and completely. Note the tasks may be oral or written. Agency is not marked, perhaps due to the fact that, from the context of situation, it is clear to the teachers and the students who are co-present who the original author is (see Nakamura, 1993).

With the second, literary type of written discourse, the pupils are asked to do two different things. Again ,they are expected to paraphrase what an author has written, to show comprehension; however, in this case, a reporting verb is required which is considered to function as a subjective opinion marker, typically *~to omou.* The second type of task, giving a reaction statement, is the time for the pupils to indicate their own opinions about what the author wrote, which also requires a subjective opinion marker, typically *~to omou.* (LoCastro and Netsu, 1997).

> *Hai to, boku wa, juusu no kan ya, gyuunyuu pakku wo, risaikuru tte yuu mitaina koto de, risaikuru sureba, gomi wo heraseru kara, seikattsu no naka no, gomi mo, sukoshi wa hette, kukara ii to* ***omoimasu.***
>
> Yes, ah I , about things like recycling juice cans and milk cartons, if we recycle [these things], [the amount of] garbage can be reduced and there will be less and less garbage in our life and that is good.

The utterance is a mixture of the vice principal, giving a talk about recycling, stated and the pupil's own thoughts. In other subject classes, such as social studies, students' opinions and interpretations are also sought. The teacher does not critically evaluate students' contributions as the explicit purpose of

such structuring of classroom discourse is to socialize them about the value of listening to their classmates and the use of formulaic routines, such as ~to omoimasu, to mitigate assertions, in particular those involving the reporting of the talk or writing of others. LoCastro and Netsu (1997) note that this culturally influenced language usage may have a role in understanding the tendency of Japanese writers and speakers of English to ellipt agency as the focus is on not only the propositional content but also the need to do facework.

EFL in Secondary Education

Not only, however, are the learners not taught how to write extended texts in their mother tongue, the efforts to develop their writing skills within the context of EFL classes in junior and senior high schools do not provide more appropriate training for future academic work. An examination of writing textbooks for senior high school English is instructive; here are two examples from a third year senior high school writing textbook (i.e. just before taking university entrance exams)

> **Lesson 18 Are You a Couch Potato?**
>
> A survey conducted in the United States recently showed that the average teenager spends more than 21 hours watching television every week. Compared to 30 hours a week spent in school, that is a lot of time in front of the TV. Knowing how influential school is, you will no doubt come to this conclusion: television is teaching you a lot about friends and clothes and love and religion and families, --in short, about life itself!

> **Lesson 28 A Common Language**
>
> Several decades ago there were hardly any Japanese who could speak English well. This was mainly because they had very few chances to use the language. The situation changed with the 1964 Olympic Games held in Tokyo. Since then the number of Japanese tourists traveling abroad has increased tremendously, and more and more people have been visiting Japan as well.
>
> When people from different countries meet, they need a common language through which they can communicate. There is no doubt that English is an international language. It is impossible to become successful in the international arena without a working knowledge of English.

(*New Horizon*, 1994, pp. 80, 122).

The main aim of the materials is to learn and practice grammatical patterns. In the first example (Lesson 18), we can observe the tell-tale "you" and in the second one (Lesson 28, the final one in the book), for the first and only time in the textbook, the learners are exposed to an example of objective writing.

Moreover, the genres which can be found in the most recent Ministry of Education-approved writing textbooks for high schools (1994) tend to be highly personal, in the here-and-now, characterized by the use of the second person personal pronoun "you." In one such textbook, there are introductions, family life anecdotes, expression of personal likes and dislikes, dialogues, journals, letters to pen pals, didactic advice on how to meet a girl, how to avoid AIDS, and cross-cultural difference anecdotes. Out of 28 lessons in one book, only the last one could be characterized as "objective" writing style. Clearly, there is a problem of a lack of appropriate models and exposure to the type of writing the same students will be asked to do in an academic environment.

The effect of these educational practices, from the point of view of EFL academic skills classes, is problematic for several reasons. First, the relative lack of evaluation in the mother tongue primary school classes of what is in a text does not correlate with critical thinking or literacy skills development. Further, a paraphrase of a sentence with the subjective opinion discourse marker obfuscates agency, and thus attribution of sources is problematized. There is more emphasis on teaching the learners to give their own reactions, rather than their clearly indicating the source of the ideas being restated. On our view, the teacher's non-interventionist role in the context of the mother tongue classes does not serve to move the learners beyond their current level of development and knowledge, i.e. the teacher is not teaching them higher level analytic skills, but rather culturally appropriate language socialization is the aim.

Second, in addition, if one seeks further understanding of the context outside the classroom, one can observe that there is a lack of models of rigorous academic writing in Japanese. The types of reading materials students read in Japanese do not cite sources or provide references, at least not in any consistent manner. According to the managing editor of the Japanese edition, the prestigious journal *Foreign Affairs* has submissions illustrating "sloppy scholarship" (Takeshita, 1996). Statements in the text given as if they were direct quotes may not in fact be so and there is a lack of awareness of the seriousness of being accurate and responsible for the evidence presented, according to western academic writing conventions.

Third, where students have had the experience of being taught how to write in English, what they may have done tends to consist of their keeping a journal, writing letters, or essays about their own opinions, ideas, or own experiences. There is no need to cite sources as they are not asked to integrate information from outside sources of information. Here is an example of one student at Tokyo University commenting on what he is learning in a new writing course taught by a practicing journalist (*Asahi Evening News*, 1997:

> Suzuki, a second year liberal arts student at Tokyo University, says: "I passed my university entrance exam by getting good marks for writing a short essay, but that was just me writing what I wanted to about what I thought. For this (new course), I had to leave my own feelings out of it and write stories using what other people said. It was difficult. I'm not sure I did it all that well."

Given that writing classes in high school consist of vocabulary and grammar exercises and the translation from Japanese into English (Takeuchi, 1997), the need to show agency, that is, attribute the source of the ideas and opinions, does not arise and the use of a variety of reporting verbs or adverbial phrases, such as "according to..." are not part of the lessons.

Even more important, they are not taught that copying from a source is unacceptable.

While some of the responses on the questionnaire presented above simply rationalize students' behavior that they themselves regard not commendable, we nevertheless feel that students' perception of the situation merits serious consideration. Writing curricula at most Japanese universities include only a cursory mention of plagiarism or identification of sources of information. As some of the informants argued, the current curriculum in Japanese secondary schools does not include any formal writing instruction whatsoever. Up until university, students are not asked to do writing tasks which require them to work with sources, i.e. they use either their own personal experiences or a text to which they respond. Since students had not been instructed anything related to plagiarism, English teaching at university should try harder to supplement the inadequacy.

Fourth, still other problems need to be addressed if these issues are to be considered seriously. Motivation may have to be considered; it is likely that only university level EFL learners who have strong professional and academic aspirations will be willing to spend the time to develop their writing skills. In addition, Japanese universities show a great deal of tolerance even when students are caught plagiarizing; the sanctions rarely involve expulsion or even a failing grade. Where non-Japanese teaching staff insist on a more rigorous approach, they may be accused of "Japan-bashing" as if they were claiming that Japanese learners are immoral and do not know that it is unacceptable to copy the work of others. In conjunction with the Japanese university reactions, there are different views and degrees of awareness as well on what constitutes "academic writing" and by extension plagiarism amongst NS teachers of English as a foreign language. Moreover, many may be unwilling to act as "police persons" and turn a blind eye to what evidence may be present.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The particular cultural explanation, which suggests that learners plagiarize due to their having been taught in primary and secondary schools that they can just copy from an authority, a view of education said to be Confucian in origin, does not seem to be a viable interpretation in the context of Japan, at least not with the learners who are currently in the educational system. Certainly since World War II, the Japanese educational system has not promoted that point of view. In fact, to insist on this cultural interpretation may lead to the person being accused of cultural imperialism. Future research should rather consider underlying, unexamined cultural values regarding the degree of tolerance of cheating in general, plagiarism being just one example or manifestation, with others being copyright infringement and the pirating of such goods as CDs.

However, we must ask ourselves what can be done with that information. Does one conclude that, on the argument of cultural relativism, it is permissible to plagiarize in the name of respect for another culture? Is cultural relativism acceptable in this context? It would be more fruitful to consider the reasons writing is not taught to the students in the junior and senior high schools in Japan. Perhaps this practice reflects the fact that, before WWII, only the elite were educated beyond the primary schools and it was assumed those students did not need to be taught to write. However, since that period of history, with virtually universal education at the junior and senior high school level in Japan, the curriculum has not yet acknowledged the need to teach skills such as writing, in particular as the educational system's main aims appear to be inculcating content and socialization into the Japanese sociocultural system.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

As teachers of English as a foreign language, we have to decide what we can do to handle the situation. We suggest that we help the students who want to or need to do academic writing in English in some of the following ways.

First, we would maintain rigorous standards both for NSs as well as for NNSs for all international academic research and writing. Needless to say, this is not unproblematic; the degrees of copying found in essays and research reports confront the teacher with a difficult decisions to make.. Again, with regards to Japan, it is clearly easier to observe plagiarism in the second language writing of most learners for the two reasons cited above, i.e. gaps in English language ability and in subject matter competence, when the topics of the plagiarized work involve, for example, philosophy of language arguments on speech acts in error-free English. However, there are two particularly insidious contexts. The first concerns the *kikokushijos* or "returnees," i.e. students who have been abroad for part of their schooling and who consequently acquire English to varying degrees of proficiency. The teacher may not be able to judge with confidence to what extent an essay is plagiarized, especially in large size classes where it is difficult to know an individual student's ability to use the language. In the second context, an academic paper may be virtually nothing more than translated passages from Japanese into English; even though the translation is poorly done, thus appearing to be the learner's own writing, the teacher is likely to be at a loss as to how to proceed in this situation. Note that, as translation from Japanese into English is taught in senior high school English language classes in Japan as a form of writing (Takeuchi, 1997), it is difficult for both the teachers and the learners: it is possible some students will not understand, not having been taught the difference, that translation is not acceptable for academic writing and, further, for low proficiency students,

they may use this method as the only means at their disposal to compensate for and to handle a situation impossibly difficult for them.

Second, with regard to the NNS learners, much more time to learn and practice the conventions of academic writing is necessary to develop the skills to any degree of fluency and success. Writing for EFL learners has to be viewed more from a developmental perspective, such that incremental stages are articulated, with learners being given extensive practice at each stage to build their skills and awareness of academic writing. Writing classes must include attention to genres of writing which require the integration and synthesis of sources and citation norms. In addition, we need to look more carefully at the correlation of language proficiency level and writing subskills. If we consider that students from a typical Japanese high school enter university with having had only the types of lessons described above, and once in a typical Japanese university, no writing classes are provided, it is not surprising that the enormous gap becomes blatantly apparent and almost overwhelming in considering the means to address it within one academic year.

In addition to requiring more time and more practice to develop their writing skills, EFL learners cannot be taught academic writing based on assumptions that their problems are the same as those of L1 writing students. Most NNS are being given instruction in writing drawing on research and practices from L1 writing teaching. Even with the highest motivation, a learner who still has a poor command of English will not be able to understand the instructions of the English teacher about how, for example, to write a summary or to integrate information from three sources into an essay on the environment. Consequently, insufficient or inappropriate teaching may explain to a great extent the situation.

Third, following Smith's (1997) stance that gatekeeping with regards to discipline students for plagiarism is unavoidable, explicit pedagogical

intervention may be needed. A booklet entitled "Plagiarism and how to avoid it," by Gardner (1995), written to support a three-hour workshop on the subject is an excellent example of the kind of effort to address the subject of plagiarism directly, rather than the ostrich-in-the-sand approach more commonly found. Out in the open, learners are more able to understand the parameters and may welcome the directness to the reprimands and sanctions imposed on essays and papers only after they have been produced.

Thus, we have to consider the role of the educational system. If learners are largely expected to memorize whatever the teacher presents them with, in the form of texts and teachers' notes on a blackboard, and to repeat that information back on tests, it is not surprising they would not understand the gravity with which plagiarism is regarded within the western-influenced academic writing conventions.

NOTES

(1) This paper is a revised version of a talk presented at TESOL'97 , 11-18 March 1997, Orlando, Florida. We wish to thank .

(2) Note that the students are taught to avoid use of "I" in their academic essays in the ELP at the university.

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APPENDIX: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ACADEMIC WRITING

Part I

1. When you were a freshman or sophomore, did you do any of the ELP writing courses?
If so, circle each which applies.

1st year	WR	spring	fall	winter
2nd year	Theme writing			

2. What grades did you get? Write in the grade you got for each.

		Spring	Fall	Winter
1st year	WR			
2nd	Theme writing			

3. If you did not do the ELP writing courses, describe what training you did get and where in writing academic papers.

4. Generally, what are your feelings about having to write academic papers in English at ICU? Put a check in front of as many as you feel describe **your feelings.**

__Necessary to fulfill requirements for graduation at ICU.
__Useful training for my future career or work.
__Interesting to learn a different way of thinking.
__Uncomfortable for me:
__I cannot write what I'm really thinking in English.
__English is imposed on us.
__I can't understand the writing style of a different culture or way of thinking.
__I want to learn how to write well in Japanese.
__Writing in such a style is only required in courses done in English.
__Necessary for writing my senior thesis.
__If I can write well in Japanese, it does not matter how I write in English.
__I came to ICU to improve my English ability in all ways.
__ICU should not have such requirements as it is a university in Japan.

Part II

1. Please write what you think plagiarism is. (Please feel free to write in Japanese.)

2. Have you ever plagiarized on your assignments in any of your courses at ICU?

never sometimes often many times

3. If you have plagiarized, in which course(s)?

Wr
Theme Writing
Other courses which require papers done in English
On take-home tests
Senior/M.A. thesis
Exams held in class
Course which require papers in Japanese.
Other:

4. From the list below, select as many items as you feel describe **your situation** when you plagiarized. Put a check in front of those which apply to you.

__I copied my essay entirely from a library or other outside source.
__I copied my essay entirely from another student's essay.
__I copied parts of my essay from a variety of sources.
__Most of my essay came from Japanese sources which I translated into English, without citing the sources.
__I only copied some sentences/paragraphs.
__I copied whenever I was not able to paraphrase well from the original source.

5. Now, from the list below, choose as many which describe **your feelings** when you plagiarized. Put a check in front of those which apply to you.

__I knew what I was doing, but as so many other students do it, I just hoped I'd get away with it as well.
__I knew my essay was poor, so I plagiarised in order to improve it and get a better grade.
__I ran out of time; I didn't have enough time to do the essay myself.
__I really don't understand how to do academic writing in English.
__I didn't make proper note cards or take down good notes in the library, so I didn't have the information to cite my sources correctly; I forgot where I found the material.
__I didn't think the instructor or professor would notice when students plagiarize.
__I believe many instructors/professors don't really care about whether or not students plagiarize.
__I think a lot of professors and instructors don't read our essays and papers carefully enough to know whether or not we plagiarize.
__I never had to worry about plagiarizing in high school.
__If I paraphrase what the author of the original source wrote, then I will make mistakes and get a bad grade.
__If I have an idea which is the same as the idea of the author of the outside source, I don't understand the reason I have to cite the author: it's my idea too.

__I only cite when I quote directly; otherwise, I do not say where the ideas I use come from.
__I take ideas and words from several different sources, put them together, and just use them without saying where they come from.
__In the ELP I can't use Japanese sources; so I just translate from them and don't say where the ideas came from.
__I feel frustrated when I have to write an essay and do nothing but cite what other people have said. I am not allowed to give my own ideas or opinions.
__I have no confidence in my ability to write good papers in English.
__I am disappointed in the way I was taught to write in English.
__I don't really care; I just want to pass.
__In Japanese academic writing, it's OK if I plagiarise.
__I find writing where I have to cite sources very boring.
__Instructors and professors don't usually say where their ideas come from: why do we have to do so?

Part III Bio-data

1. What year are you in? 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th ?
   MA 1st 2nd
2. M F
3. Division:
3. Have you ever been caught copying or plagiarizing at ICU?
4. What happened then?

WRITE ANY COMMENTS OR REACTIONS YOU MAY HAVE